



## **USPTO Patent Training Academy (PTA)**

### **PTA provides complete “basic” training to prepare new hires for an examining career, including:**

- Legal, technical, software tools, professional development skills
- Life skills, such as stress management, financial planning basics, time management
- Large lectures by experts in their fields
- Small learning labs with full-time trainers to guide new hires through their first 8 months as novice examiners
- Individual development plans to help new hires focus their career goals and successfully achieve them
- A strong foundation in patent examination practice and procedure
- Access to tutoring, library/search assistance and automation experts

### **Additional facts about PTA:**

In FY 06, Examiners will be hired to begin work in the technologies of Computer Architecture Software, Information Security and Communications currently handled by the USPTO in Technology Centers (TCs) 2100, 2600 and some areas of TCs 2800, 3600 and 3700 dealing with Semiconductor, Electrical, Optical Systems & Components, Mechanical Engineering, Manufacturing and Products, Transportation, Construction, Electronic Commerce and Agriculture. These examiners will be trained in a new training program known as the United States Patent and Trademark Office Patent Training Academy (PTA)

- The PTA Program has a duration of 8 months
- During PTA, annual (or vacation) leave will be restricted to specific time periods. These periods are likely to be during the week of scheduled Federal holidays such as the week of Fourth of July and Labor Day
- During this Program, new examiners will receive extensive training on:
  - The patent process, including how patents impact the US economy
  - All aspects of patent examining functions and responsibilities
  - Soft skills, including communications; time management; and change management
  - Automation tools available to examiner, including search tools and the Microsoft Office Suite
  - The state of technologies in the areas in which they will examine

- Examiners will begin PTA in large classes of up to approximately 128
- Within PTA, examiners will participate in large lectures for the entire class and will also be split into groups of up to 16 examiners for labs and small lectures
- Each lab of 16 examiners will have 1-2 dedicated trainers who have knowledge of patent examining procedures and the technology area in which those examiners will be working
- During PTA, examiners may hear from inventors in their technology areas and may participate in local field trips to leaders in those technology areas
- During PTA, examiners will also begin examining cases, first as small groups and then individually
- Examiners will have Individual Development Plans, or IDPs, to help them plan their goals and manage the training they need for successful careers at the USPTO
- During PTA, examiners may also have access to:
  - A class webpage that will include all training materials in electronic form
  - Tutoring
  - Automation assistance
  - Library/search assistance
- PTA will provide examiners with a strong foundation in patent examination so that they are able to work with reduced oversight upon graduation from PTA
- Upon graduation, examiners will be assigned to and report to a specific technology in their art area
- Following graduation, examiners will periodically re-join their PTA class for lectures or other activities